

IN THE CLAIMS

1. (previously presented) A hand stamp comprising:

a first marking structure having a front surface adapted to print a first ink onto an object, a rear surface and peripheral edges extending between said front and rear surfaces;

a second marking structure having a front surface adapted to print a second ink onto an object, a rear surface and peripheral edges extending between said front and rear surfaces of said second marking structure;

said first and second marking structures being permanently assembled together so that at least one of said edges of said first marking structure opposes at least one of said edges of said second marking structure, wherein at least one of said opposing edges has a non-porous surface for preventing migration of said first ink of said first marking structure with said second ink of said second marking structure.

2. (original) The hand stamp as claimed in claim 1, wherein said first and second marking structures comprise microporous foam.

3. (original) The hand stamp as claimed in claim 1, wherein said first and second marking structures comprise a mixture of thermoplastic resin and ink.

4. (original) The hand stamp as claimed in claim 1, wherein said first ink has a first color and said second ink has a second color that is different than the first color.

5. (original) The hand stamp as claimed in claim 1, wherein the at least one edge having a non-porous surface is exposed to a light source for forming the non-porous surface.

6. (original) The hand stamp as claimed in claim 1, wherein said first and second marking structures are pre-inked marking structures.

7. (currently amended) A hand stamp comprising:

a first marking structure having a front surface adapted to print ink onto an object, a rear surface and peripheral edges extending between said front and rear surfaces of said first marking structure, wherein at least one of the peripheral edges of said first marking structure has a first pattern;

a second marking structure having a front surface adapted to print ink onto an object, a rear surface and peripheral edges extending between said front and rear surfaces of said second marking structure, wherein at least one of the peripheral edges of said second marking structure has a second pattern that matches the first pattern;

said first and second marking structures being assembled together with the first patterned peripheral edge of said first marking structure interlocking with the second patterned peripheral edge of said second marking structure so that said first and second marking structures can be assembled together in only one configuration, wherein at least one of the interlocked first and second patterned peripheral edges has a non-porous surface for preventing ink migration between said first and second marking structures.

8. (canceled)

9. (original) The hand stamp as claimed in claim 7, wherein said first and second marking structures comprises foam.

10. (original) The hand stamp as claimed in claim 7, wherein said first and second marking structures comprise a mixture of thermoplastic resin and ink.

11. (previously presented) The hand stamp as claimed in claim 7, wherein said first marking structure carries an ink of a first color and said second marking structure carries an ink of a second color that is different than the first color.

12. (original) The hand stamp as claimed in

claim 7, wherein the at least one edge having a non-porous surface is exposed to a light source for forming the non-porous surface.

13. (original) The hand stamp as claimed in claim 7, wherein said first and second marking structures are pre-inked marking structures.

14-18. (canceled)

19. (previously presented) The hand stamp as claimed in claim 1, wherein said opposing edges of said first and second marking structures are in contact with one another.

20. (previously presented) The hand stamp as claimed in claim 2, wherein said non-porous surface comprises melted microporous foam that prevents ink from passing therethrough.

21. (previously presented) The hand stamp as claimed in claim 1, wherein said non-porous surface is integral with one of said first and second marking structures.

22. (previously presented) The hand stamp as claimed in claim 7, wherein the interlocked patterned peripheral edges of said marking structures comprise foam.

23. (previously presented) The hand stamp as claimed in claim 22, wherein one of the interlocked patterned peripheral edges has a non-porous surface and the other of the interlocked patterned peripheral edges has a porous surface.

24. (previously presented) The hand stamp as claimed in claim 7, wherein said first and second marking structures comprise foam surfaces, and wherein at least one foam surface of said first marking structure is in direct contact with at least one foam surface of said second marking structure.